

Adult SS - Jonah: The Reluctant Prophet-1

General Introduction

The prophetic book of Jonah is unique in its narrative format.

(The prophetic utterance that is given by Jonah is only 8 English words **Jonah 3:4** [5 in the Hebrew language])!

*“And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, **Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.**”*

Very rarely are we introduced to a “reluctant” prophet, but there are other examples in the Bible.

Jonah recounts his struggle with _____ to the Lord and also his _____ of God's ways.

As we go through this small book we are reminded of God's _____ and _____.

We also can see:

- (1) God's work in the life of Jonah;
- (2) His work in the lives of a small group of mariners (**Jonah 1:1-16**), and
- (3) His work upon a nation. (**Jonah 3**)

Knowing how the book ends, we realize that Jonah left this very transparent account to help us understand that it is necessary for us to trust God.

The time period of this small book can be dated anywhere from 800 to 750 BC.

God would rain down destruction upon this Assyrian nation in just a few hundred years, as described in the book of Nahum (613 BC). The words given to us in **Nahum 1:3** resound loudly after God's forbearance with the Assyrian nation.

"The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet." (**Nahum 1:3**)

What did Jonah know? And what did Jonah not know?

What Jonah Did Not Know:

What Jonah Did Know:

Historical Introduction

The book of Jonah is found in the midst of what we classify as the "minor" prophets.

The events of the book itself can be dated anywhere from 800 to 750 BC based on what we know concerning Jonah's prophecy found in **II Kings 14:23-25**. We also know the time frame for the destruction of Nineveh (**613 BC**) by the Medes and Babylonian siege called the *Battle of Nineveh*.

It was in this time that the nation of Israel was rapidly _____ spiritually, though flourishing under the reigns of Jeroboam II and his predecessor Jehoash.

Assyria suffered great difficulty under weak leadership and during this time would be in a prime condition for the reception of Jonah's message.

It is before this captivity takes place (**722 BC**) that Jonah is sent to preach to the major thriving Assyrian city of Nineveh. The Assyrians were known for their cruelty and were a fierce brutal nation. They would crush their enemies using tactics such as flaying, burning, and impaling. These tactics would result in horrific scenes that would line the hills of conquered cities intending on striking fear in the hearts of those that would resist.

So, what is the message of Jonah?

The Message

Jonah's struggle with himself concerning God's will.

God's heart toward the Gentile nations.

As Dr. Clarence Sexton has stated, "It shows us the extent God will go to save people."

As Jonah is referenced by our Lord and Savior concerning his death, burial and resurrection (**Matthew 12:39, Matthew 16:4, Luke 11:29**); we come to understand that this display of God's graciousness toward a Gentile nation (Assyria) prefigures God's concern for more than just the Jewish people.

Acts 10:35

³⁵ *But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*

General Outline

I. Jonah's Running: God's Preparation - Chapter 1

A. The Word Of The LORD Came v1,2

1. Jonah of Gath-Hepher v1
2. The LORD's instructions and explanation v2

B. The Prophet Rose Up to Flee v3-7

1. The Mighty Tempest v4

2. The Mariner's Fear v5
3. The Messenger's Sleep v5
4. The Master's Question v6
5. The Manner Of "gods" v6
7. The Mystery Know v7

C. The Cause Of This Evil v8-12

1. The Accusations v8
2. The Answers v9
3. The Alarm v10,11
4. The Advice v12

D. The Casting Forth v13-17

1. Nevertheless v13
2. Wherefore v14
3. So v15
4. Then v16
5. Now v17

II. Jonah's Repenting: God's Protection - Chapter 2

A. The Prayer Of Jonah v1-10

1. The Person of the Prayer v1
2. The Reason of the Prayer v1,2
3. The Manner of the Prayer v2
4. The Place of the Prayer v2,3,5,6
5. The Faith of the Prayer v4,6,7
6. The Conclusion of the Prayer v8,9
7. The Praise of the Prayer v6,9
8. The Result of the Prayer v10

III. Jonah's Preaching: God's Proclamation - Chapter 3

A. Jonah's Obedience v1-4

1. The Repetition of the Command. v1,2
2. The Obedience to the Command. v3,4

B. The People's Repentance v5-9

1. The summary of the situation. v5
2. The seriousness of the situation. v6-8
3. The statement of the situation. v9

C. God's Grace and Mercy v10

1. God saw their works. v10
2. God dealt with them in mercy. v10

IV. Jonah's Pouting: God's Presentation - Chapter 4

A. Anger and Displeasure v1-4

1. Praying and Honesty v1-3
2. Compassion and Help v4

B. Jonah's Condition v1-9

1. His Words v2,3,5,9
2. His Actions v1-4, 5-6

C. Jonah's Instruction v4-11

1. The Questions v4, 9
2. The Object Lessons v5,6-10
3. The Conclusion v10,11